# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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For more information contact:
Representative Mary Czaja, 608-266-7694
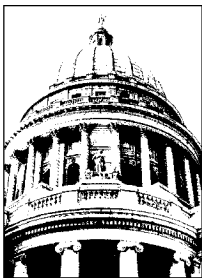Senator Luther Olsen, 608-266-0751

## Microsoft IT Academy Open Application

(MADISON) – The Department of Public Instruction is currently accepting applications for schools interested in obtaining a Microsoft IT Academy grant. These grants were championed by Representative Mary Czaja (R-Irma) and Senator Luther Olsen (R-Ripon) as part of the 2015-17 State Budget.

The Microsoft IT Academy program provides educational institutions with technology curriculum and learning tools such as digital access to technology textbooks. The school districts will be able to develop programs that are designed to mitigate workforce shortages in industries and occupations that are experiencing these shortages and to assist pupils in graduating with industry-recognized certifications in those industries and occupations. Additionally, workforce training grants could be awarded for the hiring and training of apprentices.

**"The goal of the IT Academy is to help students be better prepared for the workforce after graduation. This program will help to bridge the gap between students and jobs," said Rep. Czaja.**

**"This grant will allow schools to develop programs to help students advance their computer literacy and expand a school's digital curriculum. In today's growing economy, having a strong background in IT will not only provide students with the best opportunities to succeed in today's job market, but these skills will also help them succeed in emerging industries and careers," said Sen. Olsen.**

The number of available Microsoft IT Academies is limited to a maximum of 234 high school site locations in Wisconsin.  The number of Microsoft Office Specialist certification tests associated with each IT Academy may be variable based upon the anticipated utilization for each site.  Any school submissions after October 30, 2015 will be considered based upon remaining availability.

School principals may complete the Participation Form by the scheduled deadline date of Friday, October 30, 2015 (5 p.m. CST).

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